

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 7, 1956

TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

A major management responsibility in every Federal activity is sound administration of wages and salaries. In the field of wage administration, Congress has provided the heads of departments and agencies with broad authority to fix the pay for most Federal employees in trade, craft and manual labor jobs in line with going local rates. This authority, because of its desirable flexibility, enables departments and agencies to maintain wage plans which meet their continuing operating requirements. However, such flexibility also imposes upon us a special obligation to maintain efficient and effective wage programs.

The Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government emphasized the need for maximum coordination among Wage Board systems. This is a sound objective, and one that lends itself to action under existing authorities. It is imperative that we take prompt action to insure that our wage systems are fully coordinated to provide equitable and consistent wage treatment within and across agency lines. Much progress has already been made, but more is required.

It is requested that the head of each department and agency take positive action to:

Review existing wage policies and programs to assure that they effectively and efficiently meet the needs of his organization, as well as the other objectives listed below.

Provide maximum practicable pay comparability for employees within his department or agency who are doing similar work, under similar conditions in the same local area.

Plan and take forthright action, in concert with other departments and agencies, to achieve to the maximum extent practicable comparable pay among agencies with employees doing similar work in a given local area.

Work with other departments and agencies to eliminate duplication in wage survey and analysis.

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Under existing authorities, primary responsibility for achieving each of these objectives rests with the heads of departments and agencies. To facilitate the cooperative effort that will be required among agencies, I have asked the Civil Service Commission to serve as a central point of guidance and staff assistance. As a first step, I have requested the Commission to initiate a cooperative study with the departments and agencies to secure improved coordination and effectiveness of wage survey and analysis activities, and to report to me at an early date what actions can or are being taken to accomplish this. From time to time, I may also ask the Commission to obtain from the departments and agencies special reports and information as may be required to ascertain progress toward the President's program and the Hoover Commission report as outlined above.

Your cooperation in this effort to improve this basic management program of the Federal Government is earnestly solicited.

By direction of the President:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Philip Young". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Philip Young